Daily Report

Latin America

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Cuba

Further Castro Remarks at Young Artists Meeting

FL012125 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 26 Mar 88

["Excerpts" of the Saiz Brothers Association National Council meeting with the participation of President Fidel Castro; date and place not given—recorded; some speakers identified by caption, others not identified]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] [Castro] If I understood correctly, the first comrade who spoke proposed that professional or specialized teachers with enough training teach art classes in elementary schools, up to fourth grade, instead of having a regular teacher doing this. She suggested that a professional—not a professional artist but a teacher specialized in art—be used. That is, it is suggested that a specialized teacher be used beginning in the first grade, that a specially trained person teach art beginning in first grade. The other comrade mentioned previous experiences and said she agreed. She asserted that it had already been suggested that for the other level, secondary school, second cycle—I do not know what it is called—this should be done, but instead of two teachers, there should be one. I am not that worried about whether there are one or two teachers. I believe we have enough people to train.

To tell you the truth, at this time we hardly have people to get started. I believe that if the Education Ministry is going to do something with the teachers we have now, we should not [rephrases] we should ask them to do what they believe they can do with the teachers they have now and get a guide for instructors, for children who complete elementary school in this program—which we could call remedial—and try to reconcile today's ideas with those of the future. This could happen, as you say, in the year 2000, but the year 2000 is not as far away. It is there, around the corner. Many of us hope to get there. I say many of the... [rephrases] Armando [Hart] and I. [laughter] [passage omitted]

[Victor Rodriguez, president of the Saiz Brothers Association] I believe that the problem, the essence of what we are saying, is that at this time art instructors and those graduated from art schools who did not go to midlevel schools are separated because they do not have education training.

[Castro] They are excluded.

[Rodriguez] Excluded. They are separated. We are asking for them to be accepted, after passing an aptitude test, if they meet the requirements, if they have the skills, the ability, to teach art. They should be accepted in the same way we accept primary education school teachers after they pass an aptitude test. That is what I wanted to say. [applause]

[Castro] That is defined as the principle of the various sources. The principle of the various sources you mentioned is to look for solutions in different places. Life has taught us that some of these problems may seem simple, but in reality they are not. I have been thinking about the matter regarding the poor teacher who doesn't have a good ear for music. If you give him a music test he may end up with a very low score even though he may be very good at a science center or at a work teaching center. It would be wonderful if all teachers had good art training. [applause] All of them, all of them.

I ask myself whether we are really going to be successful in that first stage. I am trying to find out the truth; it is not that I have a preconceived notion. Sometimes I go by the practical sense of things. I had even suggested television be used, among other resources, to get started. I believe these ideas, these analyses, help us clear up a little the differences between what the Education Ministry thinks and what they [not further identified] think, and be able to reconcile them. [passage omitted]

[Delegate] We want to note the situation of approximately 37 young actors in the capital who have not had a stable job for about a year. How have they gotten into this situation? There are two main reasons: because of decisions taken by the heads of theater groups and decisions made by the actors themselves. What are the needs of these youths today? The more generalized ones are as follows: a stable job and salary, labor identification in line with the legal requirements of the country, social security, retirement guarantees, maternity leave, professional improvement, and possibility of joining a union and becoming members of a community-based committee. They have all the problems an individual faces when he loses his status as worker and, thus, is separated from our social activities.

[Delegate] The current contract laws are not fair to us. Those who got into the field after 1981 have predetermined contracts and the ones who started before have indefinite contracts. This results in big differences. What the youths ask is not that we are guaranteed a job or a salary. We feel comfortable with this insecurity, in the struggle to have to improve ourselves. We would like a more effective way that would be available to all, without distinctions. All should share the same insecurity because this serves the purpose of regulating the number of youths in the sector, forces them to show what they are capable of doing. This matter of the indefinite and predetermined contracts is not fair. We do not ask for security. [passage omitted]

[Castro] What are the causes that bring that about? It seems to be such an abnormal thing. How does that come about?

[Armando Hart, culture minister] It was a union policy decision that brought us to this. The idea was for the Culture Ministry to coordinate a contract for a specific period of time, per performance, considering the specifications and the characteristics. It is not an absolute

thing, either. One of the factors carrying the most weight in the quality of the art movement is precisely the dead weight of that indefinite contract, of that eternal right of remaining employed. We were looking for alternatives. That is what justified the proposal of speeding up the [words indistinct] process. Some progress has been made on that. We are looking for a formula to give more flexibility to the process, we are looking for a policy formula to resolve the problem.

[Castro] The main concern lies in the fact that this blocks, it blocks the possibilities of having newer people. It blocks the possibilities of quality. There should be a formula to reconcile the policy of not affecting them in any way that could be too traumatic to many, which affects their resources, their income, or their status quo acquired through many years. See if that could be reconciled with a way in which this contradiction to this problem is resolved, to give access to new people and provide access to quality as a principle.

[Hart] That is the bottom line of the problem we have had, and I believe we are touching on one of the essential problems regarding the policy followed by the artistic labor sector. I am glad this analysis is being made because indeed what has been of most concern is the promotion, not of the new actors but of the actors [as heard]. The formulas can be studied but have to be looked into with a policy criteria in mind, with the criteria of the union, with all criteria. Also, formulas in the retirement process have to be considered. Another of the formulas we are going to carry out immediately in the area of theater is the evaluation process. [passage omitted]

[Delegate] I ask myself, why is it that when someone is appointed to direct those places—such as the municipal culture director, the one in charge of the house of culture, and the person in charge of theaters—the association, the UNEAC [National Cuban Writers and Artists Union], and artists are not consulted regarding who should be appointed.

[Castro] So many people are appointed. Each People's Government operates almost independently. The People's Government of Santa Cruz del Sur... [changes thought] I even have doubts about the authority of central organizations which claim to manage systematically. There is a double tier of authority. I doubt very much their capabilities of making guarantees. They can fight and should fight and establish rules and regulations. That was already discussed quite a bit at the UNEAC and in other places. It was discussed that there were people who were not appropriate for the positions they hold. Reference of this was made not only regarding the state organs but regarding the party. The fact that there are people who are not adequate to carry out the task was discussed. Each People's Government has a world of its own. It has constitutional authority to make appointments and dismissals. I am saying this because this also happened in the area of education and health until we started finding mechanisms of coordination and, let's say, even implied authority.

I remember that I once met with all those responsible for health services of the provincial People's Government. They made appointments and dismissals and everything. I met with them all, with the health minister [words indistinct]. I told them: You are going to do what the health minister tells you to do, you are going to follow the policy directed by the health minister, and you are going to comply with it. This also happened in the education sector because some of those People's Governments have acted independently. Good people had been selected in some of them but not in others. So the struggle of the central government, the UJC [Union of Young Communists], you, the party, everyone, is to acknowledge that those problems do exist and we need to start fighting against them and overcome those difficulties.

We have heard about this at least twice. We heard this quite a bit during the UNEAC congress, regarding the ability and suitability of the individuals who direct those activities. I imagine that there may be other problems, there may have been some huckster-type problems in all this, that they have something, that they do not provide it, that it costs them, that they pay the electric power—I do not know. [sentence as heard] They could have been engaging in some of those activities. I was saying that in the field of culture, we cannot put everything—I am convinced of this—under the empire of economic mechanisms. They could be in flagrant contradiction with our objectives.

Let's say a policy... [corrects himself] a movie, could be a very good movie and not be a box-office success. Imagine that we begin making box-office success movies: pornography, sex, car races, violence, a guy killing 400 people with a machinegun. Some people like those kinds of things. Are we going to make those kinds of films? We can make films that are not box-office successes but have a good artistic value. People have to be educated, among other things, if they like. I defend the idea that in the field of culture we should not let ourselves be guided by financial mechanisms. [passage omitted]

[Rodriguez] We have the house of the creative young person. It was supposed to be for the association. The association is composed of the former Raul Gomez Garcia, the former Saiz Brothers Brigade, and is also composed of the new song movement of those under 35 years of age. Someone else should have said this but I am going to say it. We have a house that is broken down. It is in poor condition even though we have repaired it several times. It is on Puerto Avenue. People don't go there. It is small. The facilities are not suitable for the creative workshops.

[Castro] How can you exist if you do not have headquarters? [applause]

[Rodriguez] We have headquarters, but that is the problem.

[Castro] Here we can apply the phrase: I think, therefore I am. I have headquarters, therefore I am. This is the first organization I have seen in my life that exists without headquarters.

Now we can build. We are constructing many buildings; we have a huge building force. What is needed is a location, a piece of land. A project is needed. What needs to be done is to work in the preparation of the project. What?

[Speaker] [Passage indistinct]

[Castro] I know. Look at that. [Words indistinct] Habana Vieja.

[Speaker] [Passage indistinct]

[Castro] What was that? No. It is not going to be in Pabexpo. It is not going to be there. You have to find a place near the city. It is very difficult in Habana Vieja unless the facade is left and a building is built inside. This is the way child care centers, schools, polyclinics, and everything else is built in Habana Vieja. Perhaps there is some land in El Vedado. But it has to be found soon. [applause] [passage omitted]

Someone said he had a speech but got all mixed up when he spoke; another one said something else about the ideas he did not want to express at this time. I want to give some of my impressions of the meeting and some personal conclusions I have arrived at. Not only I but I believe all of you have had a good impression of this meeting. I think we are going to be satisfied with the meeting when we leave. It was pretty fruitful, pretty productive. Many comrades have spoken although others did not have a chance. At the end some gave up their turn to speak.

Everything did not go smoothly all the time; it was impossible for everything to go smoothly all the time. There were some family disagreements, but they helped give an open, candid, sincere, and spontaneous nature to the meeting. Many things were said at this meeting, many deep, serious—very serious—things were said.

Some comrades such as Comrade Armando [Hart] have referred to that meeting in... What year was that, Armando? [Hart answers: 1961] In 1961. A long time has gone by. Armando mentioned the changes that have been made, the differences between that meeting and this one. It is logical. Almost 30 years of revolution do not go by for nothing. If we were to be very strict we could perhaps ask ourselves, with a spirit of self-criticism, whether or not we have used these 30 years of revolution well. Undoubtedly, we would all agree that we could have used them much better. But it would also be fair to say that much progress has been made.

It is a unique experience for us to meet with this new generation of intellectuals, artists, creative people. I like the term creative people. I use it more broadly, not only for writers and artists, but also for workers. They are creative. Scientists are creative also. We should use that concept. We should even use it for those who produce material goods. This is a society of creative people.

It is very fair to use the term when we speak of our artists, intellectuals, and writers. I say it is a unique experience because we are looking at the fruits of the revolution. Marti once said: Our wine is bitter, but it is our wine. The fruits of the revolution, with all its defects, are the fruits of our revolution and, in reality, it is not bitter. Those of us who have been sharing here today with you have been able to see just the opposite—the sweet fruits of the revolution.

A number of characteristics have been noticed. They do not stop attracting our attention despite the fact that we are used to seeing positive and encouraging things. They are the seriousness with which things were said here, the confidence, and the sincerity. I already mentioned the depth, I would even mention the high level, of the remarks because of the ideas expressed and the manner in which they were expressed. In my opinion, they show true promise for our country. I hereby confirm something I have been noticing in our country. No matter how dissatisfied we may be, I see many positive things in our people, many. I see many positive things in our youth. Had we not believed in the people, where would we have ended up? That is such a clear, eloquent example. It is logical to have that confidence. We believed in the values of the people and their ideas even when we were left with seven rifles.

A few days ago a ceremony was held to mark, I believe, the 30th anniversary of the day Raul and I joined up. We only had seven rifles, yet we went on. How could that have been done if one does not believe in the people and their moral values? How many people were willing to give their lives and how many gave them? Would they have done this for any amount of money? Today we also ask ourselves, is it for the money? Are we going to motivate on the basis of financial mechanisms? No, that is impossible. I believe we are rewarded by the confidence we have in the people when we see all the things I am telling you. I see them every day and everywhere. Nobody tells me about them; I do not read about them in reports. I see them. I talk to the people. I like to talk to the people. I talked to the 27 directors of the 27 child care centers we had to inaugurate. I talked to the music people and I asked them how they work.

By the way, comrade, I was told that the child care centers' music instructors study 4 years. They go through a 4-year training. It is not a 6-month course. Some child care centers may not have that kind of staff. The personnel may not be available in many places, and some of those problems may be found. But I was really very impressed with the ones I saw in the new facilities and

the ones that are being built, impressed at being able to confirm the fact that they have 4 years of training. It is worth dwelling a little on this to get ideas regarding the answers we must give to things that were mentioned here.

I have relayed this long story because I believe in the people, in the revolution. I believe we can be proud of the revolution and its work despite ourselves. Someone mentioned, with much conviction, what I said once: We have built a revolution larger than ourselves. We should be proud of that revolution which is larger than ourselves but we should keep cultivating it, we should keep developing it. This revolution cannot be good in a number of things alone. This revolution has to be good in everything. [applause]

We do not have the same problems we had in 1961. There are new problems and there are old problems. We have to implement this rectification principle. We have to find new solutions to new and old problems. We have to be courageous, we have to be courageous. [repeats himself] We have to carry the banner of freedom because that was always our banner. We have to carry the banner of truth because that was always are principle, our struggle. I believe we have to be courageous and forge new paths.

Someone said we can make mistakes. We can say: Yes, we can make mistakes in some things, but we can have everything here. I remember that when I mentioned the matter of striving for the highest spirit of criticism, we said it is better to have the inconveniences of the mistakes that are made than the inconveniences of the mistakes of a situation characterized by the absence of criticism. I could say, it is better to have mistakes resulting from too much freedom than the mistakes or inconveniences of not having any freedom at all. [applause]

Nicaraguan Interior Minister Makes Stopover

PA051935 Havana International Service in Spanish 1800 GMT 5 Apr 88

[Text] Nicaraguan Interior Minister Tomas Borge has described as a serious mistake the counterrevolution's decision to postpone Wednesday's top-level meeting in Managua to discuss a total cease-fire.

Borge said during a brief stopover in Havana on his way to Uruguay that the counterrevolutionaries have not considered the damage they are doing to their image or the negative consequences that could result from this postponement. The Nicaraguan leader spoke of his government's willingness to meet with the counterrevolution and opposition parties, and to search for peace in the country. Borge cited the Sapoa agreements, which were signed in March with the counterrevolutionaries, and other agreements signed with opposition groups as examples of that willingness.

Uruguayan CP Leader Arismendi Tours Cienfuegos

FL051640 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 5 Apr 88

[Text] Rodney Arismendi, secretary general of the Communist Party of Uruguay, has toured Cienfuegos Province. He attended the plenum of the party provincial committee. After greeting its members, he noted that the triumph and consolidation of the Cuban revolution has been the most important event in Latin America since the wars to liberate its people from European colonists were fought.

Arismendi visited the nuclear power plant under construction, a dairy in Escambray, a pediatrics teaching hospital, and other centers of social and economic interest.

Costa Rican Legislators Conclude Visit

FL052347 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 5 Apr 88

[By Gisela Bel Herredia]

[Text] Today a group of Costa Rican legislators concluded their visit to Cuba. Last week the legislators carried out a program of activities that included visits to areas of social interest and talks with Jose Ramon Fernandez, education minister, and Severo Aguirre del Cristo, acting president of the National Assembly of the People's Government.

Prior to departing from the Jose Marti International Airport, Antonio Tacsan Lam, first secretary of the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica, told the press that they observed some well-known realities and, because of this, Cuban cannot be ignored by his country or by Latin America. He said that his visit to the woman's prison was most impressive.

[Begin Tacsan Lam recording] The concept of jail ends there. It is not a prison. It is not a jail. It is a model for education, and it seems to me that it is truly oriented toward rehabilitation. [end recording]

What we have seen, he said, will allow us to intelligently and objectively compare the information we have.

Haiti

Peasants Protest Rents; Refuse To Pay Taxes

FL060109 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1100 GMT 5 Apr 88

[Report by Hinche correspondent]

[Excerpts] Last week we visited (Wangoman), an area that is part of the commune of Hinche and not too far from (Los Palis). It takes some 6 to 7 hours to reach (Wangoman) on foot from Hinche. 1,111 families live in (Wangoman). The village is on state lands. [passage omitted]

Everyone you meet talks to you about the cost of leasing land from the government. They say the cost is too high and there is no school, drinking water, or dispensary. [passage omitted]

The peasants had complained about the increase in the cost of leasing government lands in 1985. They said it rose from three gourdes to 50, 60, and even 100 gourdes. The government back then intervened and promised to lower the prices. The government fell, however, and nothing was done about the problem. The peasants are standing their ground, maintaining their same position. They say they will not resume paying taxes until the price comes down and the government provides dispensaries, schools, and potable water.

The peasants would like very much for Hinche's tax collector, Mr (Dorsey Casimir), to come up into the mountains. This would allow him to see for himself how badly eroded the land is. [passage omitted]

(Wangoman) has seven villages. Some of the people would be willing to pay 4 gourdes per carreaux [unit of land equal to 1.29 hectares] to rent state-owned lands. Others would be willing to pay 6 gourdes while some people are not willing to pay anything at all.

In general, people don't want to pay more taxes than they can affod. They also say that before they resume paying, they have to see what kind of improvements the state is going to provide. [passage omitted]

El Salvador

Coprefa Reports on FMLN Clashes, Casualties

PA051430 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 5 Apr 88

[Text] A Coprefa report says soldier Pedro Pablo Moreno, 18, was killed yesterday in a clash with insurgents in the fifth jurisdiction of San Vicente. The military report adds that a rebel was killed in a clash with members of the 3d Brigade in San Bartolo, San Miguel Department. Finally, the Army report says FMLN guerrillas last weekend murdered two peasants on Los Avelines farm, Guatajiagua jurisdiction.

Honduras

Matta Ballesteros Arrested on Drug Charges

PA051558 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1120 GMT 5 Apr 88

[Text] It has been confirmed that Juan Ramon Matta Ballesteros [who is accused of drug trafficking] has been captured and is at a military unit. Attention, Voz de Honduras listeners:

Our news department has been told unofficially that Juan Ramon Matta was arrested at around 0530 in an operation carried out by the Cobra Squad of the Public Security Force [FUSEP] at the America neighborhood, where Matta lives. He was immediately transferred to an unspecified military unit. It was also reported that six of Matta's employees were arrested by the Cobra Squad and have also been transferred to another military unit.

Nicaragua

H. Ortega Refutes RN Charges, Proposes New Date

PA052230 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 2035 GMT 5 Apr 88

[Letter from Defense Minister General Humberto Ortega to Adolfo Calero, head of the Nicaraguan Resistance (RN) delegation at Sapoa; dated 4 April]

[Text] 1988, for a dignified peace, free fatherland or death.

Managua, free Nicaragua, 4 April 1988

Mr Adolfo Calero, director:

I wish to refer to a letter dated 29 March 1988 sent by Mr Aristides Sanchez to Comrade Victor Hugo Tinoco, vice foreign minister, and delivered in Sapoa, Nicaragua; as well as to two letters sent via fax on 2 April 1988 by Mr Roberto Ferrey to Comrade Tinoco. Those letters mention an alleged commitment by [words indistinct] whereby the 100 prisoners to be released on Palm Sunday would be your choice of people.

For the sake of the seriousness and credibility of the revolutionary government I represent, I hereby wish to make the following clarifications:

On the night of 23 March, during an impromptu meeting held at (El Castillo) and directed by [words indistinct], I told you, Alfredo Cesar, and Aristides Sanchez that the Nicaraguan Government was willing to receive suggestions concerning the names you wanted included among the people to be released on 27 March. Aristides Sanchez mentioned a name that was taken into consideration. We did not agree on any such list of names, nor did I make any verbal commitment to release 100 counterrevolutionaries chosen by your people. If that had been the case, it would have been more favorable for us, politically speaking, if this were thus established in the Sapoa agreements of 23 March 1988.

Therefore, the constitutional Government of Nicaragua acted according to the Sapoa agreement of 23 March and according to the conversations held between all of you and myself by including in the list of the released people several people suggested by you. In this regard, I am reiterating what Comrade Tinoco said in a note sent by fax on 26 March 1988 and addressed to Jaime Morales Carazo to the effect that this suggestion was made too late; the Sapoa agreement does not commit us to this; and the suggestion was not a very serious one, as it included a considerable number of former Somozist officers. According to the Sapoa agreement dated 23 March, those people were not scheduled to be released on Palm Sunday.

The above two letters sent by Roberto Ferrey mentioned that the daily LA PRENSA is experiencing a paper shortage. In this regard, and although this subject is not included on the agenda of the cease-fire talks, I wish to clarify that in Nicaragua there is total and absolute freedom of expression for any political group of people, as guaranteed by our Constitution and laws.

Therefore, the Government of Nicaragua has told the nation's newspapers that it is ensuring that sufficient resources are made available to the newspapers so the shortage of paper at any printshop is not the government's responsibility.

On the other hand, it is a matter of concern that the special RN commission attending the Sapoa talks is saying it is not empowered to decide on the tasks entrusted to these special commissions, such as agreeing on the location, size, and modus operandi of the zones. This situation hinders the progress and fulfillment of the terms and dates established according to the 23 March Sapoa agreement. For its part, the constitutional Government of Nicaragua's special commission is fully empowered to decide on these subjects.

In concluding, concerning the RN directorate's unilateral decision to postpone the meeting slated for 6 April and thus not comply with the dispositions of the Sapoa

agreement of 23 March, the constitutional Government of Nicaragua is forced to propose that the meeting be held on 9 or 15 April, and it awaits your decision in this regard.

Free fatherland or death.

[signed] Humberto Ortega Saavedra,

Army General and Minister of Defense

cc: Alfredo Cesar, Aristides Sanchez, Ambassador Joao Clemente Baena Soares [OAS secretary general], Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo

Gen Cuadra on Special Commissions Meeting

PA060233 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 2343 GMT 5 Apr 88

[News conference held by Major General Joaquin Cuadra, head of the Nicaraguan Government delegation at the Sapoa talks, with local and foreign reporters in Sapoa—live]

[Text] [Cuadra] Members of the press, we just completed the first working session of the special commissions today. We must say that this working session began today and we agreed in principle to work until we fulfill the mission established by the Sapoa agreement: to agree on the location, size, and modus operandi of the zones.

We also agreed to start working at 1000 tomorrow and continue working all day tomorrow. We hope to make more progress tommorrow than we did in the short time we met this afternoon.

Today's meeting developed in the same atmosphere and climate that characterized the previous meetings here in Sapoa. Today we held indirect, open, and [words indistinct] talks, as on previous occasions.

If any of you want to ask a question, I am ready.

[Reporter] Today Mr Bosco Matamoros of the Nicaraguan Resistance [RN] talked about attacks and violations of the truce by the EPS. [Words indistinct] and he also talked about what happened to Mr Mandragon [a coffee farm owner killed in the border area]. We also asked him about the teachers who have been kidnapped and about the [words indistinct]. He claimed that the RN did not violate the truce, but the EPS did. We would like to know what you think of that.

[Cuadra] The EPS and the Nicaraguan Government have fulfilled the Sapoa agreements fully and to the letter. The EPS has not violated the Sapoa agreements. It has not conducted any offensive operation against the rebel forces.

Undoubtedly, in these last few weeks we have had a series of minor incidents, which are a logical result of the current situation: We have not yet agreed on the location and size of the zones.

One of the goals for the establishment of zones is the separation of forces. As long as the two forces are not separated, as long as rebel groups move throughout Nicaragua, it will be practically impossible to avoid minor incidents—and we are not talking about EPS offensives. In the last few weeks we have not had major incidents or clashes, but minor incidents in various parts of Nicaragua.

We had clearly stated this during a meeting today, and we said there is an urgent need for the strict fulfillment of the agenda established by the Sapoa agreement. This will allow and will be the only means to resolve the various incidents that have taken place. Evidently, because of other types of technical interests, they have tried to give those incidents a different aspect by alleging that the Army is breaking the Sapoa agreements and increasing offensive actions against rebel forces. We [words indistinct] clearly established that the military chiefs who were present at the meeting could testify and could realize when they were dealing with a true EPS offensive.

[Reporter] Major General, [words indistinct]...

[Cuadra, interrupting] [Words indistinct] about the suspension [words indistinct] we have not completed the [words indistinct] that is in the process of being discussed. There are many points of agreement [words indistinct]. However, we cannot yet speak of the exact definition of the contra movement.

[Reporter] Major General, what is your opinion about the counterrevolution's demands concerning the Managua meeting? They are talking about wanting freedom to move and wanting to stay at the Intercontinental Hotel. They also said they want to get in touch with a series of groups. First, to what extent do you think the counterrevolutionaries, the RN, would try to increase its political influence during the cease-fire negotiations and turn these talks into an overall negotiating process? Second, what can you tell us about the effort for negotiations? What impact do you think the approval of the $48 million had on the negotiations?

[Cuadra] First, let me tell you that it seems there has been a misinterpretation of the Sapoa agreement concerning the purpose of the meeting of the two high-ranking commissions in Managua. The Sapoa agreement clearly states that on 6 April—a date that was unilaterally postponed by the contras—there would be a meeting in Managua to continue discussing a cease-fire. The agreement did not mention a visit to Managua to conduct political campaigns. The contras' participation in the political dialogue is established by the agreement. It says this will happen once the rebel forces enter the

special zones. Therefore, there has been a clear misinterpretation of the agreement. They gave a whimsical interpretation of what the Sapoa agreement actually says. What was the other question?

[Reporter] How does the approval of the $48 million affect direct negotiations?

[Cuadra] Well, our government describes the $48 million in humanitarian aid approved by the U.S. Congress as illegal and an intervention in Nicaragua's internal affairs. That money is the problem of those who depend on it. We have not yet seen that this approval has had any specific effect on today's meeting. However, we must point out that, generally speaking, there have been some political effects. After Congress approved the $48 million for humanitarian aid, counterrevolutionary leaders increased the number of their statements. They unilaterally decided to postpone the 6 April meeting, which was established in the agreement. That is a violation of the Sapoa agreement.

In addition, there have been a [words indistinct] of accusations against the Nicaraguan Government. They are saying the government is not fulfilling the agreement and that they have a list, that the government did not [words indistinct] the prisoners, and that the government is violating the truce, etc. That is the counterrevolution's reaction after the approval of the $48 million.

In our meeting today, we did not observe any specific effect because of that situation; at least not today. We still have other working sessions and perhaps something linked to the approval or to the way in which the aid will be delivered may arise in those discussions.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] they were saying they will never lay down their weapons.

[Cuadra] That is not what they signed in Sapoa.

[Question indistinct]

[Cuadra] The Sapoa agreement talks about reintegration into peaceful life. We cannot think that someone can join the country's peaceful life while carrying a rifle. Therefore, to join the country's peaceful life once a cease-fire is reached, there must be a process by which those individuals or those forces will join the country's normal life without weapons. That is an essential and basic requirement.

[Reporter] Major General, Bosco Matamoros also made a number of accusations, including ones about the Alfredo Mandragon issue. What can you say about that?

[Cuadra] The issue of this individual Alfredo Mandragon is in the hands of the Nicaraguan authorities. As far as we know, that gentleman owned a farm in Carazo. It is a coffee farm. By the way, he was making good profits there. He went to the border area on his own, where he had some relatives. As a result of a situation that is being investigated by the authorities, he was killed in an incident. Other individuals were also killed in that same incident, and some EPS members who were patrolling the border area at that time were also injured. This was a border patrol unit. That incident is being investigated.

[Question indistinct]

[Cuadra] Not that we know of. He owned a farm there. He traveled to the border on his own. [Words indistinct] near Somotillo [words indistinct].

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] a Nicaraguan Interior Ministry official as the one who [words indistinct] of this Mandragon person.

[Cuadra] He is a captain appointed to investigate this case. He arrived at the scene after the incident.

[Reporter] What explanation did the rebels give for the delay in arriving here today?

[Cuadra] They gave the same explanation they gave last time. They said they had logistical problems. They had problems finding space on the plane and they had accommodation problems. They also said they had trouble finding vehicles to go from San Jose to Liberia. They said all that caused the delay [words indistinct]. They asked the government delegation not to interpret this as a maneuver to delay the agreements that we hope to reach at the end of these meetings. Thank you very much.

Correction to Government Restructuring Report

The following correction pertains to the item headlined "Restructuring of Government Announced," published in the 5 April Latin America DAILY REPORT, page 16:

column one, paragraph five, line five: ...Comrades Gilberto Guzman, James Zablah, and Orlando Solarzano... (confirming name)

column one, paragraph six, line five: ...Mario Flores and Oscar Melendez are appointed as... (confirming name)

column two, paragraph one, line one: ...7. Moises Hassan is named president... (correcting name)

Rice, Parts Shortages Slow Production at Mills

PA051604 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1200 GMT 5 Apr 88

[Excerpt] Production at rice mills in Carazo Department has decreased due to a shortage of rice and parts for threshing machines. Mill employees report six mills in Carazo Department have had to decrease their activities by as much as 90 percent due to the rice shortage. They added that they have faced a rice shortage since the end of February, when rice shipments from Malacatoya, the region where the largest rice plantations in southern Nicaragua are located, were reduced. [passage omitted]

Panama

Government Accepts Church Dialogue Mediation

PA052351 Panama City Telemetro Television in Spanish 2317 GMT 5 Apr 88

[Communique issued by the Panama Metropolitan Curia on 5 April]

[Text] The Metropolitan Curia hereby announces that the archbishop of Panama, His Excellency Msgr Marco Gregorio McGrath, was verbally told yesterday, 4 April, by the national government that it would participate in a dialogue with the opposition and that it agreed to mediation by the archbishop.

The government promised to make this decision official today by sending the archbishop a letter, in accordance with the communique issued by this curia last Saturday, 2 April. After this is done, initial contacts and formal conversations will take place.

Government Confirmation

PA060136 Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 0022 GMT 6 Apr 88

[Text] Tonight Panama's Presidential Press Secretariat issued a communique stating that in the last few hours government authorities and the Panamanian Catholic Church met at the highest levels to discuss the participation of the government and the political and popular forces that support it in a dialogue with the opposition to try to find definite solutions to the political crisis that divides Panama.

The government's attitude is consistent with and reinforces the drive to hold a national dialogue, which began Monday at the urging of the People's Unity Front.

The communique added that these negotiations are in response to an initiative by Costa Rican President Oscar Arias Sanchez and Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez and former presidents Carlos Andres Perez and Daniel Oduber, of Venezuela and Costa Rica respectively.

The communique said an exchange of correspondence is under way, which could allow a national dialogue to be established with mediation by the Catholic Church and with the participation of all government and opposition political forces.

The communique concluded that at this difficult hour for the homeland, a negotiated Panamanian solution appears to be the only path to prevent a physical confrontation among Panamanians and to ensure a peaceful future for Panama.

'People's Militias' Begin Training

PA060417 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2359 GMT 5 Apr 88

[Text] Panama City, 5 Apr (ACAN-EFE)—The Panamanian people are organizing "people's militias" made up of volunteer patriots in order to defend the "dignity of the fatherland," Virgilio Perinan—coordinator of the "Dignity Brigade"—said today.

Perinan, a political leader [and husband of San Miguelito Mayor Balbina de Perinan] in the densly-populated San Miguelito district, 11 km from Panama City, said the recently-created "Dignity Brigade" is the result of a possible armed invasion of Panama by the United States.

The politician said this threat increased today with the arrival of 1,300 U.S. soldiers, which—according to the Washington government—is to guarantee the security of the 45,000 Americans living in Panama City and on the military bases located on the banks of the canal.

In Arraijan, a town 17 km from Panama City adjacent to Howard Air Force Base, a group of Panamanians is also preparing to "wage the last battle against Yankee imperialism," as they themselves said.

A total of 35 residents from Arraijan—a town considered "a bedroom for U.S. soldiers" because it is so close to Howard Air Force Base—have already formed a "patriotic battalion" to cope with a possible U.S. invasion.

Meanwhile, the volunteer recruits have already begun their military training supervised by members of the Panama Defense Forces, which will culminate with basic training in the use of weapons.

Ministry Denies Arrival of 'Marxist Brigade'

PA060050 Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 0020 GMT 6 Apr 88

[Text] This afternoon the Panamanian Foreign Ministry issued a communique denying a WASHINGTON TIMES report on the supposed landing of an international Marxist brigade in Panama on 24 March. The brigade supposedly spread out to various parts of the country. The Foreign Ministry said that this report is untrue and comes concurrently with the sending of an additional 1,300 U.S. troops to Panama to establish a state of opinion favorable for an interventionist military action in the midst of the political uncertainty that is part of a systematic campaign of orchestrated disinformation against Panama during the last few months.

The Panamanian Foreign Ministry emphatically denied these reports and called on all domestic and foreign media to report the real facts with strict adherence to the truth.

Canal Employees Hold Antigovernment Protest
PA052355 Panama City Telemetro in Spanish 2300 GMT 5 Apr 88

[Text] Panamanian employees of the Panama Canal Commission [PCC] staged an antigovernment demonstration outside the administration building, located in an area that has reverted to Panama. Panamanian police and transit authorities prevented cars coming from Panama City from entering the reverted area. The PCC employees told "Telemetro Reports" newscast that their action was a peaceful protest of the serious crisis the country is experiencing, which is affecting the majority of the people.

FDP Foils Demonstration; PCC Gets Bomb Threat
PA060155 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0033 GMT 6 Apr 88

[Text] Panama City, 5 Apr (ACAN-EFE)—Panama Defense Forces [FDP] units have dissuaded sympathizers of the National Civic Crusade [CCN] from holding a rally. The rally was organized to demand the release of Carlos Ernesto Gonzalez de la Lastra, who has been detained for 8 days.

Since the early afternoon hours soldiers in combat gear have surrounded Porras Park, at the center of this capital, in order to prevent the rally announced by the opposition.

CCN sympathizers tried to gather, but the soldiers threatened them so they would leave in an orderly manner.

Gonzalez de la Lastra, one of the chief leaders of the opposition coalition, was arrested on 28 March. This happened after the FDP used tear gas and birdshot to disperse a demonstration organized by the opposition.

That afternoon, Gonzalez de la Lastra was driven by police agents to a public prosecutor's office in Panama City. He was to answer to charges of attacking the integrity of the state.

"The sole proof is that I waved the national flag along Central Avenue," Gonzalez de la Lastra said while leaving the public prosecutor's office. He was guarded by police agents.

Employees of the Panama Canal Commission [PCC] today held a demonstration against FDP Commander General Manuel Antonio Noriega in front of the PCC administration building.

Shortly before 2000 GMT, the scheduled time of the demonstration by the PCC employees sympathetic with the CCN, an anonymous person with a "Spanish accent" telephoned to warn that there was a bomb in the administration building.

Several PCC fire engines surrounded the area around the administration building. The firemen vacated the area and inspected the building. Meanwhile, FDP soldiers blocked several roads leading to the site.

According to Panamanian PCC Deputy Administrator Fernando Manfredo, this is the fourth time the administration building has received a bomb threat.

Manfredo said that based on the Torrijos-Carter Treaties signed by Panama and the United States, the "Panamanian police have the responsibility to protect all of the canal's areas of operation and housing."

PCC spokesmen confirmed that no explosive device has yet been found inside the offices.

Despite this incident, less than 30 minutes later more than 100 PCC employees who were in the area held their demonstration and chanted slogans against the Panamanian Government and Gen Manuel Antonio Noriega.

FENASEP Leader on Need for Government Changes
PA051735 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 1313 GMT 5 Apr 88

[Interview with Juan Manuel Meneses, leader of National Federation of Associations of Public Employees (FENASEP), by unidentified reporter; place not given—live]

[Text] [Reporter] You have met with government officials and have presented a proposal for resolving the current crisis. Has there been a direct answer from the government? Have they thought about using your proposal as a solution? No one seems to have the solution to the problem, and I believe you are the only one who has presented a serious and firm plan. What answers have you received from the government?

[Meneses] Unfortunately, I have to point out that the government has been weak as far as adopting measures that will benefit the people is concerned. These measures could become a source of support for the government since we are not going to support our enemies. The people's movement is very clear regarding this matter. However, we must also say the government's ability to decide this country's future has been weak. There are several ministers who don't obey even presidential orders. I have brought this up because we have repeatedly said this country needs changes within the government; changes that will lead us to positive solutions; changes that will allow us to resolve the problems facing our fellow countrymen. Unfortunately, there have been changes within the executive branch and other institutions, but we still have too many sinecures, too many people who represent the interests of the United States. We still have ministers who worked with and advised [former President Nicolas Ardito] Barletta and [President Eric Arturo] Delvalle. These people are no guarantee for the popular sectors.

Even though we have said that our problem—the crisis that has us on the verge of firing a large number of people from their jobs—has been caused by the United States and the international financial organizations and the foreign debt, we must also say that the government has its debt with the people. For example, our agricultural, industrial, and labor sectors were seriously affected by several IMF measures imposed in March 1986. Abolishing those measures would not cost Solis Palma's government a single penny. Furthermore, we have tried to ease the way for him. We have asked for one bill containing one article that would return the private sector's stability. This would represent a great step forward in our path toward development. Not even this has been done.

We have asked for a reorganization of the cabinet and for our representation within the cabinet. We want representatives who are willing not only to help the country overcome the crisis but also to confront our enemy. Unfortunately, there are still some within the cabinet who say they never expected the United States to be so hard on us. They have been hard and will continue being hard until they achieve their goal. They will achieve it if we continue to be soft.

[Reporter] What do the people think about the arrival of more U.S. troops?

[Meneses] We have been very clear on this. We expect to see determination on the part of the civilian government. We understand that the military sector has been preparing. We know we are no match for the U.S. Army, but we can warn them that many U.S. mothers will cry.

Our Constitution states that defending the homeland is a duty shared by all Panamanians. We must abide by this. We have repeatedly asked for and said that voluntary training is necessary. We now must go from words to specific actions. We know how to do it.

[Reporter] When General Noriega spoke at an FUP [People's Unity Front] meeting, he expressed his hope that the Defense Forces could walk alongside the popular sectors, but there seems to be something stopping this unification. What could this be?

[Meneses] We have already answered part of that question. The current cabinet is hindering this unification; it is an obstacle to the country's development. Gen Noriega spoke during the ceremony marking the anniversary of Battalion 2000 in Cimarron. He said then that no solution was possible without the participation of the people. However, there are some in the executive branch who support Noriega—we call them the nationalist bourgeois—who want the canal, but for different reasons. They believe the canal should be in the hands of the private sector, and we feel it must belong to the state; you can see where the problem lies. They are going to do their best to isolate us, and we are going to do our best to fight from inside.

Health Ministry on AIDS, U.S. Soldiers

PA051437 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 5 Apr 88 p 1

["Communique to the people" issued by the Health Ministry in Panama City on 4 April]

[Text] The Health Ministry, aware of its duty to protect, preserve, and improve the health of Panamanian men, women, and children, on this occasion wishes to express its concern over the arrival in our territory of an increasing number of U.S. soldiers. These soldiers, in addition to being a military threat to our sovereignty and independence, pose a real threat to our people's health.

According to epidemiological data provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Disease Control in reports dated 4 July 1986 and 5 February 1988, at present 87.6 percent of all AIDS victims on the American continent—51,361 of a total of 58,609 cases—are in the United States.

It has also been reported that in a recent study of a representative sample of U.S. Armed Forces personnel around the world, a large percentage of the personnel tested positive for the AIDS virus.

Consequently, in view of the fact that a U.S. military contingent has recently entered our country and that its medical records are unknown to us, we can do no less than urge our people to refrain from any intimate contact with those soldiers.

Men and women of Panama: Remember that our national integrity is defended in many different ways. One way is to reject the outrage being imposed on us.

Health Ministry

Panama City, 4 April

Argentina

Alfonsin Discusses Current Situation

PY051530 Buenos Aires Argentina Televisora Color Network in Spanish 0001 GMT 5 Apr 88

[Address to the nation by President Raul Alfonsin from the Olivos presidential residence in Buenos Aires on 4 April—recorded]

[Excerpts] I believe it is useful and necessary to address you to express some of my reflections, especially regarding our inexorable desire to continue the struggle for the future of our fatherland.

A certain type of atmosphere is beginning to pervade the country, and, in particular, some serious events that have shaken us will be the main points of these reflections, of these explanations. A feeling of pessimism, perhaps even disenchantment, seems to have gripped all Argentines.

It is not easy to define this atmosphere, but it is present, and it is dangerous. And because it is dangerous, it is necessary to understand what it is all about in order to dissipate it, because if it persists, it will bring no good to the country. [passage omitted]

You are informed, you know that we are not experiencing good times and that very serious problems are burdening our national activity. Our daily tribulations have actually been increased by renewed inflation, recurring terrorism, and by understandable social unrest nowadays, including a long teachers strike, one of its most outstanding expressions.

I assure you that I personally am suffering with the teachers strike. This sector has been very dear to my government because we, from the time of our electoral campaign, have always given great importance to teaching.

Very few governments in the world have insisted, as we have, that it is impossible to carry out any large collective undertaking such as the growth of the nation, the development of the country, or the consolidation of the democratic system without a solid cultural basis. And the schools are the main center of this creation.

We have preached before, and continue to preach today, that the role of teachers is crucial to our life. The idea that they are not well paid really hurts me.

The same thing happens with workers, employees, professionals, and the millions of Argentines who suffer, one way or another, from the effects of the economic crisis, the largest and deepest in our history.

As for the teachers, I am convinced that through the offer made by the nation and the provinces, we have taken a very important step in the struggle to obtain an equal level of salaries for all.

I am also convinced that this distressing situation also hurts the teachers, who naturally want to fulfill their vocations.

The system of coparticipation has played a role here. We have increased the coparticipation of the provinces from 48 percent to more thant 56 percent. More than 4 percent of this difference has been channeled to the area of education, a service that was transferred to the provinces without appropriate allocation. But the situation of the country does not allow for quick solutions.

All governors, I am sure, share my feeling that teachers should be paid in accordance with the importance of the job, one of the most meaningful jobs anyone can perform. It is nevertheless senseless to try to seek magic solutions when the economic state of the nation cannot afford any more. Let us search for ways to continue the dialogue on the basis of our proposals in order to find a medium-term solution and end the vicious circle of poverty. This will allow the Argentine provinces to face the problem of education with equality. But meantime, let us end the strike. [passage omitted]

Keeping institutional order is fundamental to consolidating the efforts we Argentines are making with great sacrifice, and so is ensuring the results of such efforts.

All investments will become mere speculation unless the state of law is respected by all sectors. Investments will be a mere economic risk if mad revolts and adventures are not eliminated. One single image of a military officer who goes underground, rebroadcast by world television, can ruin months of effort by an entire people to create favorable conditions of predictability, credibility, and seriousness.

The main battle we Argentines must fight in this process of democratic transition is that of consolidating the presence of our legitimate representatives against the remnants of a corporate state, who intend to maintain the power they obtained under authoritarian regimes.

While most of the military men, businessmen, members of religious institutions, and those who control the communications media have demonstrated their unyielding commitment to democratic institutions, some minority groups are trying to exert pressure in order to maintain their influence in the political field. These groups have been continuously moving between two political models that have prevailed in Latin America throughout this century: that of permanent institutional instability with lengthy periods of authoritarianism of one kind or another, and that of democracy with a republican facade in which the corporations exercise real power.

This government's main task is to put the corporations back in their proper place, outside the political arena, reserving this arena for the citizens and their political representatives. In this way, the shameless fight among interest groups can be replaced by the debate about and the democratic decision for a vision of a model of the country that will impartially consider the interests of all.

For this reason we reject the idea, defended by some, that the country's prevailing ideology must be defended by the corporations, that the democratic government must be limited to effectively administering the course of action imposed by that ideology. [passage omitted]

Our everyday difficulties and anxiety cannot be blamed on mistakes that the government may have made. But neither can we deny our current problems with an irresponsible attitude of ignoring our past and the difficulties we have inherited.

We should realize that past and present difficulties are different. If we fail to see the difference we will fall in a trap, because we will adopt the irresponsible attitude of saying that everything is fine and that there are no problems, and because we will resort to the apocalyptic, tragic language which is one step away from a coup. In fact, those who do not want democracy take advantage of these disappointments, and it is not by chance that the difficulties we are facing have been used to attack the system of government.

Let no one be deceived. There are coup makers in Argentina, and it is to their advantage that Argentines have a feeling of frustation. We know very well what they did in the past.

By no means do I intend to say that to criticize the government and to point to difficulties and objectives is the same as attempting a coup. Nothing of the sort.

I just want to say that this attempt to promote the disbelief of society is part of an action that seeks to destabilize our democracy.

The ingredients of the coup recipes are well known. Their point is to promote a series of images: government inefficiency, corruption, and atmosphere of insecurity, general chaos, and the idea that the country is out of control.

Until some days ago, this strategy was being developed within a psychological campaign, but last week it escalated to include terrorist actions.

But terrorist action will not go unanswered. I want Argentines to know that we are willing to defend democracy, which was so difficult to achieve, with all the powers granted by the Constitution and the law.

We are responsible for the tranquillity and security of the people, and we will spare no effort to preserve them.

Therefore, let no one be deceived. Let no minor group of ultraradicals believe that if they promote confusion, uncertainty, and fear, they can wait for democracy to collapse. The only ones who will collapse are the Nazis and the ultraradicals of any sector that try to ignore the Argentine people's will.

This government still has much to do, and it will not be disturbed by the madness of illegal sectors. Not by terror, slander, or a smear campaign will they achieve their objectives. Let there be no doubt. We have been struggling for a long time, and we will continue to struggle.

We still have 2 years of work ahead of us. They will undoubtedly be difficult years, but not as thankless as the first 4 years. The efforts of the Argentine people will begin to yield results. We will see that a mature people, who rejected fascism, will begin to gather the results of their work.

Argentines are mature enough to realize what happened in our recent past, which all of us have suffered. We have achieved our maturity and we now know what we want from the present and from the future. We are so mature that we will not give in.

I want to reiterate once again my commitment to every one of you, my commitment to the search for solutions that exact the lowest price from all of us, with the determination to always keep in mind that each government decision affects men and women who have suffering and hope. I simply reiterate my commitment to truth and to the respect for each Argentine. Thank you very much.

Alfonsin Leaves To Meet Sarney, Sanguinetti

PY061156 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1120 GMT 6 Apr 88

[Text] Buenos Aires, 6 Apr (TELAM)—Today President Raul Alfonsin said that his visit to Brazil is very important. The visit begins today, and Alfonsin will meet with Brazilian President Jose Sarney and Uruguayan President Julio Sanguinetti.

Alfonsin spoke briefly with journalists before boarding the Argentine Air Force TC-91 plane at Ezeiza International Airport. He said: We continue to work for and to implement the integration agreement with Brazil.

Alfonsin is accompanied by Foreign Minister Dante Caputo, Economy Minister Juan Sourrouille, and Public Works Minister Rodolfo Terragno. Other members of his retinue are International Economic Relations Secretary Jorge Romero, Agriculture Livestock and Fishing Secretary Ernesto Figueras, and Industry and Trade Secretary Juan Ciminari.

The entourage also includes Corrientes Governor Guillermo Leconte, Entre Rios Governor Jorge Busti, Misiones Governor Julio Humada, and Emma Perez Ferreira, chairman of the National Commission for Atomic Energy.

Colombia

Pact on Constitution Referendum Suspended

PA052005 Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1730 GMT 5 Apr 88

[Report by Jesus Garzon]

[Excerpt] The Narino Palace Agreement [Acuerdo dela Casa de Narino], which was the first great pact to bring the government and the Conservative Party together and

was signed on 26 February, has been broken after the State Council decided to temporarily suspend it.

The pact was to have reformed the national Constitution through a referendum called for 9 October. Government Minister Cesar Gaviria Trujillo and Communications Minister Fernando Cepeda Ulloa called for the referendum in January. The idea generated sharp legal controversies, but President Barco and former President Pastrana, who heads the Conservative Party, finally agreed on steps for the referendum.

The State Council unexpectedly declared the Narino Palace Agreement unconstitutional just a few hours before the Commission on Constitutional Reforms was to outline the topics to be discussed at the extraordinary congressional sessions, which were scheduled to begin on 12 April. [passage omitted]

Peru

Nicaragua's Borge Stops Over; Discusses Talks

PY060304 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 0100 GMT 6 Apr 88

[Text] Today Nicaraguan Interior Minister Tomas Borge made an 8-hour stopover at the international airport on his way to a 5-day visit to Uruguay. Before his departure Borge made the following statement for our news program:

[Begin recording] [Borge] I am here in transit. I am on my way to Uruguay on an invitation from President Sanguinetti.

[Reporter] What can you tell us about the situation in Nicaragua, the Sapoa agreement?

[Borge] Well, the talks between the Nicaraguan Government delegation and the contras were going to be resumed today. A complete agreement was not reached during the previous talks. This is why it is presumed the talks will continue today to complete the agreement about the zone where the counterrvolutionary forces would be placed as a first step toward handing over weapons.

[Reporter] Is there a willingness for peace by the Nicaraguan Government in order to reach a successful agreement?

[Borge] This is self-evident. It does not need any demonstration. We have demonstrated in several ways that Nicaragua has a concrete willingness for peace, an undeniable desire.

[Reporter] What is the U.S. Government's attitude toward the talks?

[Borge] We have received information [words indistinct], not public, that the current U.S. Government is even pressuring the contras not to reach an agreement with Nicaragua.

[Reporter] Are the U.S. forces moving toward Nicaragua?

[Borge] What forces?

[Reporter] The U.S. troops

[Borge] No, the troops that were stationed in Honduras have already left. What is happening is that the term of the Reagan administration is coming to an end; therefore, Reagan is not making decisions with the same agility and energy as he did a few months ago.

I am happy to be in this country, a country we Nicaraguans love. [end recording]

Venezuela

Bomb Found Near Interior Ministry Offices

PA051818 Caracas Venezolana de Television Canal 8 in Spanish 1600 GMT 5 Apr 88

[Text] Acting Interior Minister Adolfo Ramirez Torres has confirmed the report that a bomb was found outside his ministry. Ramirez said that the bomb was not found inside the ministry offices and that he is waiting for DISIP [Directorate for Intelligence and Prevention Services] to complete its investigation before giving any opinion.

[Begin recording] [Ramirez] No. There was no bomb inside the offices; it was found near the offices. DISIP found a box containing a bomb near the Interior Ministry, and it is now investigating. DISIP will provide the information when it concludes the investigation.

[Reporter] The press has reported, however, that the box with the bomb was found at the ministry's doors.

[Ramirez] It was near the corner of [words indistinct] but not inside the ministry.

[Reporter] Would this be related to any desire to take revenge against the ministry?

[Ramirez] I do not believe there is any intent to take revenge against the ministry, but we are investigating anyway. Acts like these always have to be investigated, and the results will be released at the proper time. [end recording]

[Hamburg DPA in Spanish at 1704 GMT on 5 April in a similar item reports the bomb was homemade and did not go off because it was "apparently planted by amateurs."]